

**Ambassador Feinstein's Remarks for the Democracy Promotion Event  
September 11, 2012, 10:30am, Foksal Palace**

Thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for that kind introduction. And thank you for your service at a critical time in Tunisia. A scholar and a diplomat, we are fortunate you are serving as our moderator today. I am truly grateful to Minister Pomianowski and the Government of Poland for working with the U.S. Embassy to organize today's event.

Our theme today – *“Polish-American Cooperation for Democracy”* – is in fact one of the pillars of Polish-American relations. Minister Pomianowski was critical in Poland's brave decision to serve as America's protecting power in Syria. On behalf of all Americans, we thank you for your service and your country's support to ours at a time of need.

Our shared democratic values – together with our security cooperation and our economic ties – chart the course for our two countries in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Our security relationship is fundamental. One of my proudest days was signing last year the agreement to establish an aviation detachment at Lask airbase. The aviation detachment will open in a few weeks.

It will be the first continuous presence of U.S. troops in Poland. It is an important and symbolic step, which speaks to the growing depth and of our security cooperation.

Security depends on prosperity. That is why we have worked together to elevate our trade and economic ties.

We have a lot to be proud of in the cooperation between the Foreign Ministry and the Embassy on this score, including the important energy conferences the Ministry cosponsored with the Embassy in 2010 and 2011 and the successful U.S.-Polish business summit last June.

Today, we are here to mark our democracy cooperation, another pillar of our relationship. As President Obama said when he was here in 2011, Poland brings special credibility to democracy promotion both because of the success of your transition and the immediacy of your example.

Our discussion of joint U.S.-Polish efforts in support of democracy is especially timely today, as we commemorate the anniversary of 9/11. Our countries know that supporting democracy and aspirations for universal rights is both right and smart.

It is right because we are true to our core values when we support those seeking a greater voice in their own societies.

It is smart because by supporting democracy and democratic institutions, fundamental human rights, and the rule of law, we build the best and most impregnable defenses against terrorism and violent extremism.

Poland is a model and a mentor for emerging democracies; a force for peace, progress, and prosperity around the globe. So, it is natural that the United States would seek to join with Poland, an inspiring example of a successful and peaceful transition to democracy and a market economy.

Our democracy cooperation with Poland is diplomatic and programmatic.

Diplomatically, Secretary Clinton and Minister Sikorski established the U.S.-Polish “Democracy Dialogue” the only such dialogue the United States has with another country. When our governments agreed to establish this dialogue last year we could not have anticipated how relevant and important it would become, not only in the eastern neighborhood, but also in North Africa and the Middle East, and globally.

The purpose of the dialogue is to share best practices, coordinate policy, and align our activities. The dialogue has great potential. We are here today to encourage that potential, and to discuss and evaluate some of our most promising cooperation to date.

America’s commitment to promoting democracy in the eastern partnership countries begins with direct U.S. assistance.

In fiscal year 2011, the United States provided \$317 million in bilateral assistance to these countries. In addition, we signed a five-year package of assistance with Moldova, under the Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact, worth \$262 million.

You have in your materials our estimates of funding provided to the eastern partnership countries for the current fiscal year, which are on par with last year’s levels, as well as our request to the Congress for assistance next year.

Foreign Minister Sikorski just travelled to Georgia last week. Our commitment to Georgia is equally strong. Since 2009 U.S. assistance to Georgia has totaled \$1 billion.

We hope U.S. bilateral assistance to the eastern partnership countries will encourage the EU Eastern Partnership Initiative to move ahead with its important work.

Today, I want to highlight what we are doing, Poland and the United States, together, under a new program called the Emerging Donor's Challenge Fund.

This is a program started in 2011, where the United States partners with governments who have a unique capability, in many cases superior to ours, to foster democracy and support civil society. These programs are among the first fruits of the Democracy Dialogue we initiated in March 2011.

I'm pleased to report that in addition to direct U.S. assistance to the countries of the eastern partnership, the United States is also co-funding with Poland a number of joint, innovative projects through the Emerging Donor's Challenge Fund. These cooperative projects, some of which will be discussed during the panel discussion include:

- The School for Political Leaders of the Eastern Partnership countries. This project provides training to the next generation of political leaders in the eastern neighborhood.
- Support for the Solidarity Fund of Poland. Together we work to support civil society, human rights, and legal education in Belarus.
- An Information Center for Local Authorities in Moldova. The Information Center will enhance the institutional capacity of regional and local authorities to plan and implement reforms in a manner compatible with EU standards.

[In addition, the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw supports the **Polish American Freedom Foundation (PAFF)'s Kirkland Program** which brings citizens from nine former Soviet republics to Poland for an academic year. We are proud to be providing funds for additional scholarships for Belarusians starting this fall.

We are also supporting conferences for alumni of Poland's Kalinowski program, which enables Belarusian students barred from studying in Belarus for political reasons to undertake university-level studies at Polish universities. The Embassy is also supporting the Vital Voices Program to support mentoring for women from Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and Georgia.

I look forward to welcoming and honoring these smart and courageous leaders at my residence on Thursday in advance of this year's Women's Congress.]

Finally, our cooperation is global, including support for the Community of Democracies. Ambassador Leissner Madam Secretary General – it is an honor to have you with us today. My government looks forward to working with you and supporting your efforts.

Professor Geremek and Secretary Albright launched the Community of Democracies over 12 years ago in Warsaw. I was fortunate to witness this event in Warsaw with Secretary Albright, and brought with me a copy of the “Warsaw Declaration,” agreed by the CD countries, which I proudly hang in my office on Ujazdowskie. The CD was an idea ahead of its time, and it has never been more important that we support this institution than today.

At the July meeting of the Community of Democracies Governing Council in Ulaanbaatar, Secretary Clinton announced the U.S. plan to provide an additional one million dollars for the Community of Democracies.

The U.S. commitment to building a Europe whole and free is strong and innovative. Demokracja to znak towarowy relacji Polsko-Amerykańskich i symbol naszej przyjaźni i sojuszu. Dziękuję.